



Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument

Update – February 2004

I just wanted to update you as we continue working toward developing management alternatives for this national monument.

Last summer, as part of our continuing effort to invite public participation in planning for the monument, we asked for the public's help in formulating alternatives. We hosted 11 alternative development workshops across north central Montana and asked that everyone interested contact us with ideas and concerns.

The public provided about 7,200 comment letters and emails, including numerous copies of several form letters or organized campaign forms. All comments were read and about 2,600 specific comments were identified and organized into 64 subject categories and subcategories.

Your list of high priority topics included the road system in the monument, the use of motorized watercraft on the river, backcountry airstrips, and natural gas activity. Many other topics were also discussed including wildlife management, livestock grazing, and overall management direction. The entire 130-page comment summary, and a 30-page working alternative comparison table, is available for viewing and/or copying at our website at www.mt.blm.gov/ldo/um.

These comments were and continue to be used by our planning team as we build management alternatives for this monument. The planning team is currently estimating the effects of various management options (or alternatives) and continuing to revise and develop new management options.

The BLM will have the draft plan available in July 2004, followed by a 90-day public comment period and another series of public meetings in August 2004.

All of us at BLM appreciate and value your participation in this process and hope you stay involved. This national monument will be managed in a manner that reflects your effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Slagel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Slagel